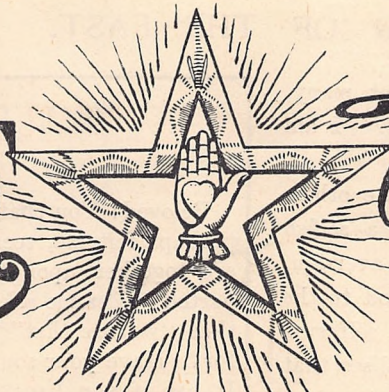


STAR OF THE EAST



A Journal issued monthly for liberal thought, the help of self and others
by the practice of concentration of mind ; in Unity with the Universal Soul.

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VEDANTA.

There has been many questions asked us what the teachings of the Vedantas are, both by letters, and otherwise, and as an answer to these questions we will print in this month's "Star" a lecture given in explanation on this subject, by the learned, and liberal Swami Trigunatitta, who delivered this lecture before the Vedanta Society in San Francisco, in 1905.

We shall give it without commentaries, as it speaks for itself:—

"My friends,—Our subject is to-night 'The Great Indian Philosophy of Vedanta.' Now, what is Vedanta? All over the world it is known more as a philosophy than as a religion. No one says 'Theology of the Vedanta!' but 'Philosophy of the Vedanta.'

"We hope you will not be shocked, my friends, if you hear to-night that Vedanta, which you so much admire, is neither a philosophy, nor a theology, nor religion; neither a science, nor a system of faith, nor a theory. Neither is it a scripture, nor a code of laws, nor of discipline; neither an object, nor a subject, nor an idea. Neither is it made by man, by sage, or by prophet. Made—nay, not even by God: it is not made at all. It is ever existent. It is neither of this age, nor of the by-gone golden age alone. Vedanta is infinite and eternal, because it is neither of this world alone, nor of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of all the heavens alone, but of all, in all, from all.

"Listen further, Vedanta is the philosophy of philosophies, the religion of religions, and the science of sciences. It is the end and aim of all this. It is the very terminus of everything. Nay, it is beyond all: It is the knowledge after which all philosophies, all sciences and religions have been searching. It is the knowledge of that truth, towards which all faiths, all ideas, and disciplines are aiming; and friends, you know what knowledge that is? It is very peculiar: there is no end of that knowledge: the more you know the more inquisitive you become, the more zealous you become,

to know more the further you search for truth. The more you search, the higher you rise, and the higher you rise, the further you want to go.

"Never you stop, never you stand, never you look downward, nor backward, nor to this side nor the other. You do not think of this world, nor of heaven, but you keep on rising higher and higher until you have become fully conscious of the one Essence which is God within you, and in this consciousness you rise further and still further, saying, and practicing diligently, 'Neti, Neti' (Not this, Not this), until you go beyond everything which holds you confined in the lower, yes, you transcend everything. You can thus recognise and realize the absolute, You, the Real Self. This Self is absolute freedom, and in absolute freedom there is Bliss, and such is God.

"Freedom, such is the nature of the knowledge of the absolute, and such is the idea that we receive through the teachings of Vedanta. It is only Vedanta that can make man reason freely, higher and higher until he reaches the very highest, where there is no more reasoning needed, because all misery is ended and all relativity has ended.

"At the same time, Vedanta establishes the relation of man to the world permanently, and beautifully. It is Vedanta alone that can make man the most social, moral, and dutiful to the world.

"How is this done? First, let us take the dualistic or qualified nondualistic face of Vedanta. The dualist will say, according to Vedanta, 'Not I, but thou. Everything is God within me, all things are, 'Thou, O God.' Thus he kills the egotism he has had, and he substitutes Divinity.

"Everything is God to him, and he realizes God in everything, and this wise he can gladly give his life for the very smallest that crawls, because he realizes the living soul everywhere as the all pervading. If we take it from the standpoint of the non-dualistic, or adwaitist side of Vedanta, they say, that the Self is the only one substance existing, because what we hear and see, in so many forms and names in the universe, is but 'MAYA,' or ignorance, and this is but the phenomena or apparent.

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“Really speaking, the phenomenons are not many, but only one, and thus there is but the Self. ‘I am He. I am He.’

“Whether the Vedantian goes one way or the other, he will no longer look upon the world from a selfish point of view, but he will rise above envy, aversion, jealousy and the like, and he can truly do good to the world from a real sense of duty fostered by self surrender to God, the self within, because he realises that the self within him is immortal, and present everywhere. He and the world is one, because he and the self is one.

“Some people have tried to misconstrue the teachings of Vedanta, by saying that it leads to self-hypnotism, and pessimism; to the contrary, the concentration and meditation, which it teaches, will protect you against such, as well as other troubles, and makes us strong in common sense, and gives us power of right judgment, as well as to improve our conditions in every way. The race is pre-hypnotized by the world, and the things in the world until it is enslaved to it, and look at and live in it, as was it the real self, and this is the reason why it is hard to understand the real, and listen to its voice. Vedanta removes this influence from the mind by teaching man who he is and what the world is which he recognises, and in this wise Vedanta gives full freedom to the race because at the same time that it shows us that the external is but the covering, it explains to us the true relation in which we stand to the external, and we will see that instead of us being ruled by the external, we become its rulers, and in this wise we go onwards to higher and higher understanding and greater freedom. We see that Vedanta is the teaching of the Universe, and that the soul is the universal self which rules it, and all limitations are for ever removed from us, and there will be but one soul, and the universal external is its cover.

“By the Vedanta culture you will be able to realize this true state of yourself. The pre-hypnotism or bondage you are under in this world is, Vedanta says, nothing but “MAYA,” or the play of Nature, and this play of Nature upon you is not real, but apparent.

“What you see, hear, and touch in this world, only seems to be so; because of your mistake or dire ignorance. Vedanta removes this ignorance within you and sets you free and helps you to see the One Reality.

“We must remind you again, my friends, that Vedantism is neither an outcome of, nor an entry into speculations or imaginations, nor is it sentimentality; it could not be so, as it is the basis of all science. All laws, and truths that have been, and will be discovered in the future, cannot reveal one particle more in Nature than Vedanta does.

“The word Vedanta is composed of two Sanskrit words, Veda and Anta. Veda means knowledge, and Anta means the end; and thus Vedanta means the end and goal of all knowledge, Divine Wisdom.

“Vedanta lead all its students to the realization of the great Absolute truth in the ultimate, as it is the Universal teaching of the Universal Soul.”

Temple Lesson.

Beloved: You that meet with me in silence, you have perhaps felt me, seen me, or otherwise realized that we are together upon the times which we set before we parted? Let me ask you, have you realized any clearer that “we are that” which we seek, pray for, and long for? Have your souls been able to express any clearer? It has if you have stopped, thought, and considered, that you are in the heaven now, and that when you retire within all limitations which the outer sense makes are gone, and you find yourselves free, because when you draw yourselves away from the visible, you will go away from ceilings and walls, and you live in the full liberations of the Self. Emerson says in his “Over-soul,” “that the Self within cannot be described: it is undefinable, unmeasurable, but we know that it pervades and contains us, and we know that all spiritual being is in man, and therefore God comes to us without bells,” etc., etc. And for sure, the less we estimate things around us which we see, the more we shall learn to estimate the soul which we do not see.

Emerson further says: “that we can crowd an eternity into an hour, and an hour into eternity,” and that “we do when we retire the senses from things which the eyes see and live in that which they do not see.”

In “The Voice of the Silence,” by Madam Blavatsky, we read, “Look into the well of thine own heart, and answer. Knowest thou the Self of power? O thou perceiver of external shadows!” She means to say that we are but perceivers of the external, which is but shadows of the true Self.

Let us retire within, as often as we can, and for the time being, forget everything around us, and we shall find the power of which Voices of Silence speak in the Self.

Concentration.

We have read, and taught, with one the other in the past what concentration is, and what it does, and we will understand it better the more we understand that we are not to recognise what we see, but what we do not see, and at the same time bring our will to bear and in this wise use the stored up energies to regulate things with which we deal.

I would suggest that we take the Golden Rule for the subject of our concentration, that we read it to ourselves first, and then be in silence with it for a few minutes until we have become one with it, and we will be greatly helped by the vibrations which it will bring to us.

Read to yourself every morning, “Do unto others as you wish to be done by. Do unto others as you wish to be done by, Hari within me, Hari around me, and Hari above and beneath me.” Hari means Lord (God).

Shri Rama Krishna says: “If thou wishest to see God have firm faith in the efficacy of repeating the name Hari (Lord), and try to discriminate between the real and unreal.” The unreal is what the senses recognise.

Take deep breaths, while in concentration. We meet in this wise in the morning or between 5 and 7 a.m. every day up to July the 27th.

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To the Pilgrims.

To all Pilgrims, we would send the message which Lord Shri Rama Krishna has given in his saying, entitled "Love and Knowledge."

It says, "Knowledge and Love are ultimately one and the same; there is no difference between them, as pure knowledge leads to pure love, and the knowledge of God (Inana), may be likened to a man, while the Love of God (Bhakta), is like a woman. Knowledge has entry up to the outer rooms of God, but no one can enter the inner apartments (the Zenana) of God save Love, which has access into the mysteries of the Almighty.

Let all Pilgrims be at the Shrine of this great Master and Teacher, while emerging in the life of this his great saying.

Question Box.

SEEKER.—Why is it that one has a fear of death although one believes in a life hereafter?

Ans.—Because we are bound up in the senses, thinking that there are many lives to live, happy and unhappy; while the latter is true as to our experiences, yet there is but one life, one Universe, and one great soul which operates, through the various degrees of matter. When we become freed from the sense-delusions regarding death, we shall have no fear of that change which will bring freedom to the Self if it be only in a measure in each body.

HENRY.—Sister Avabamia: Please tell me, through your paper, if it can be true that we can be in one part of the world, and be seen in our astral in another part of the world without having left the body in death?

Ans.—My kind Brother: The soul does not need to be absolutely severed from the body to be seen elsewhere; it is everywhere, because it is Universal, and when I say this, I do not mean only in a universal sense, but I mean you, the part of that universal soul. You can be in many parts of the world, and be seen in them all at one and the same time. The body cannot confine you, neither now, or after you have left the form for good; and the more you see yourself in the soul and abandon to live in the confinement of the little sense body, the more free you will become, and the greater will the scope be of action outside of the physical body both now and hereafter.

O.—Is there forgiveness of sins in the "eleventh minute?"

Ans.—Sister: It cannot be so if the law of "Karma" is true.

ETHEL.—Shall we part with our friends for ever when they leave their body, or shall we meet in the great beyond?

Ans.—My Beloved Sister: I feel that you do not ask this question from the standpoint of the knowledge that the body which you recognise as your friends or relatives are not the persons in reality, but only in the phenomenon of matter the Self, which is the person truly, is not familiar to you, and since the question can be answered from a soul standpoint only, I must say that it will depend upon the quickening of the soul consciousness, and not upon any other conditions whether you shall be among, and express in the same degree of action as those you used to know in the body as friends. When we become freed from the deception of the senses, then we shall not think of a parting because we will understand that all is one.

THINKER.—Dear Madam Editor: Is it true that those who steal, and kill, etc., are confined in darkness—a cell called "Kamaloka"—and that they will remain there until someone helps them out?

Ans.—My good Brother: If you understand the above expression as a cell or narrow place of confinement like here on earth, you have misunderstood its meaning. "Kamaloka" means a degree on the astral or after the astral plane, and not so much a place, and those who are there are such as have not been awakened to their soul reality of life; and I would say that it depends upon the motive and the inner knowledge of honesty, and the reverse, and not so much upon the deed. I firmly believe that more of those who are looked upon as "honest" by the world, are the greatest thieves and murderers, than those who, by weakness or want of that which they need, steals and murders, and also that those called "the good people" will be in darkness longer than their brothers whom they have condemned, while they themselves have been criminals indirectly all their lives. It is not so much the deed, it is the motive, and all those must remain until they become quickened to the knowledge of their wrongs, and then come back to live their lives over again. "The help in getting them out" can be given by good thoughts from those who are awake as souls themselves.

STUDENT.—Sister: Do you ever intend to return to America again?

Ans.—Yes, Beloved. I shall be back in that lovely country after my work is done during this journey, and we shall meet and have much to tell one the other. Live in the soul and not in the senses, and time will fly, and you will be younger and wiser, and so will I when we meet. Much love and peace.

DR. B.—I would be very much pleased if you would kindly answer a question for me in the "Star." Is one man justified in killing another man in "self-defence?"

Ans.—No Brother; no one has the right of taking a life, neither from man or beast; and as far as self-defence is concerned, that does not give us any allowance as one life is as good as the other. The so-called "law of justice" gives a man the right to kill another under such pretences, but the law of God is clear on this subject: "Thou shalt not kill," and this means all for it is absolute. It is true that we cannot kill the soul, we cannot even hurt it by killing a man, but we take opportunities away from the soul for more freedom, by removing it from the body in this wise, and we will have to answer for every opportunity which we take away from one the other, by which we could have risen higher.

F.—Sister: Shall this earth be destroyed?

Ans.—Nothing can be destroyed.

RUTH.—Sister: Please answer my question in your paper. Is it not right to prevent a marriage, when you know that the man is bodily and spiritually much lower than the girl, and when you know that she will be given as a sacrifice in every way to the low life which he leads?

Ans.—The question of "Karma" must govern the answer, and I would say that if the lady have unfolded so that she is on a higher plane of spirituality, then it is retrogression to her to join herself with one who lives "destructive Karma." She does not only retard her own experience, but she becomes guilty of bringing offspring to suffer the consequences for the life which she must lead as the wife of a "destroyer," and upon her falls the sorrow, and sufferings which those innocent ones must endure who will be the fruit of sensuality, and must live in the terrible results.

She can help the man to rise out of his low life by sending pure thoughts without making herself one with him in the density of unconsciousness, by mingling body and soul in the terrible element in which he must live until he has lived it out. From this point of view it is your duty to prevent such marriage, and thereby save her soul and that of her unborn from darkness.

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Continuation of the Letter which we Begun in Our Last "Star."

Our trip to Suva on the Fiji Islands was beautiful, and smooth, and there was a breeze all the way, so that the heat was not more than we could stand quite comfortably, although it became warmer the nearer we came to the dividing line—the Equator—and afterwards towards Suva, where we arrived ten days after we had left Honolulu.

It will be impossible to describe the wonder of the sun-rise, as in beauty it was beyond anything that one could imagine.

The clouds looked like blood to begin with, and they changed from it to purple, to gold, to gold and silver mixed, and finally to pink, and less shades until they became an extreme mass of whiteness, and the water was still, not a ripple, and the colors reflected in the water until one felt as though one must jump into them and live, and become part of such wondrous beauty. Oh, I cannot give you in words the faintest comprehension of such picture, and back of all this were the hills with big green trees beneath which were a mass of houses and native bungaloes. Oh, thou great God who hast made all this, what will it be for us when we shall learn more of thy power in nature. Soon as the vessel had stopped moving, here came the natives in a steam launch with the Doctor for quarantine, and it was a strange sight to see their bushy heads well combed, and their bodies looked clean and well taken care of, and they were not burdened with many clothes, as they only wore a breech-cloth, reaching from their hips to the knees; some wore a linen coat, and others had nothing on their upper being. As soon as the Doctor was done looking at all of us, the boat got into harbour, and then the queer sight began. There were dozens or more natives selling bananas and large baskets of corals, which were as white as snow, and as fine as though they were woven with the finest spiders' webs, and shone like glass. Big quantities were sold for one shilling. Bunches of bananas about 200 in a bunch, for two shillings.

Everybody went up in town to get breakfast, and it was a strange sight to be waited upon by men in breech-cloths and bare-footed; those waiters wore linen, very clean looking coats, to cover their bodies, and they were extremely polite, and spoke English faultlessly.

The breakfast consisted of fruits, (native) tea, bread and butter, and any quantity of meats (for those who wished it) but without it we partook of the fruits, tea, bread and butter, 5s. for two.

After our meal, we went out to see the city. We saw everything we could in the stores fitted with native head-work, etc., until time for leaving. That day it was extremely warm, and I had too much of it—so much so that I had to remain in bed for two days after we left the city, from over-heating. The perfumes of the flowers loaded the air everywhere, and palms and flowers were to be seen in great beds, and the trees stood like brides wherever we went, and fruits in profusion.

We went through the Botanical Garden, which is the only sight to be had, as there is all kinds of tropical plants and trees.

There is but one or two made streets, otherwise there are roads made by the travelling, which has been done on them. Everywhere were the little smiling dark faces, and each one we met said "Good morning" to us.

We saw groups of Hindu women with their anklets, head and ears, and some noses bedecked by silver ornaments, and they had put on their babies all they could bear. They smiled and looked very happy, sitting chatting here and there. We were told that the "lowest element of Hindus were sent to this place as coolies,

and that they are worse than the natives." The Editor's wife, of the "Fiji Times," told us this, and it is hard to tell if it is true or prejudice against the Hindu as a race, so I only repeat what she said to us, and leave room for the doubt in behalf of my brother the Hindu. One can hardly believe that those natives were once cannibals, because they look very intelligent, and are gentle to speak to—so much so that they will speak to you in more reverence than many white men do.

We bought some of their bananas as they were so cheap in comparison to what we were used to, that it was a novelty, and we had more than we wanted between the islands and Brisbane, Australia.

The natives came aboard to sing for money; they were five, four as a quartette sang, while the fifth clapped his hands against a board of wood, keeping time, and it was wonderful to see how well they knew "first and second tenor, and first and second bass," and they sang fine in their own tongue. They dived like the natives of the Hawaii for money until the boat was out of their reach.

We stayed there to 2 o'clock p.m., when we sailed for Australia, and the natives sang their songs as the boat glided out from the harbour, until the sound of their voices were lost in the distance.

On our way between Suva and Brisbane (which lasted five days), we saw all kinds of Islands in the Ocean, and in some places it was so shallow that one could almost see the bottom, and it is my firm belief that some day there will quickly rise a mighty continent, and what is seen will become swallowed up again. We finally began to see in the distance the outlines of Australia, and many hearts leaped for joy as they knew that they would soon see those they loved face to face, for on such long journeys one becomes so used to see nothing but water that it is a treat to behold land.

We got into Brisbane during the night of Saturday, and had to remain still all Sunday, owing to the strict closing law of Sunday.

Now begins the account of our experience as total strangers in Australia, but we will leave it to our next paper as space will not permit us going any further, but next letter will be very interesting to you, I am sure. It is wonderful what a revelation travel is, anyway.

Yours for truth,

SISTER AVABAMIA.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mail between the United States and Australia is five cents per half ounce, and not two cents per ounce, as in America alone, and we would ask friends to take care and not send letters postpaid with two cents only, as they will lie in the post office here for want of postage, and liable to be lost. We cannot afford to pay for mail coming to us, so kindly put five cents on your letters and have them weighed if more postage should be required, double postage being charged for postage due on letters.

All terminations of subscriptions will be marked with a cross (X) hereafter, so please take notice, and we will be much pleased to receive renouance of same.

We would ask all our friends to write to us with each boat once each month, and you will hear from us. Practice the lessons carefully, and we are always with you. We also appeal to our friends to send us what little help they can for our fund, by which we help our suffering brothers and sisters in India. The cry from India comes to us every day: "Come over and help us." All gifts will be accounted for in the "Star."

Address all mail to J. S. Warner, Manager Star of the East, Sydney, Australia.